REMARKS

Claims 1 - 8 are pending in the present application. By this Amendment, claims 3, 4 and 6 have been amended and new claims 9-12 have been added. No new matter has been added. It is respectfully submitted that this Amendment is fully responsive to the Office Action dated March 9, 2005.

Allowable Subject Matter:

Applicant gratefully acknowledges the indication in item 6 of the Office Action that claims 7 and 8 are allowable.

Applicant also gratefully acknowledges the indication in item 5 of the Office Action that claims 3-6 would be allowable if rewritten to overcome the rejections under 35 USC 112, second paragraph, and to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

However, for at least the reasons discussed below, it is respectfully submitted that all of claims 1-6 are allowable.

35 U.S.C. §112, Second Paragraph Rejection:

Claims 3-6 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which the applicant regards as the invention.

This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claims 3, 4, and 6 have each been amended to overcome this rejection. Accordingly, withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

As to the Merits:

As to the merits of this case, the Examiner sets forth the following rejection:

claims 1 and 2 stand rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by Takayama et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,683,643).

This rejection is respectfully traversed.

What is disclosed in Takayama, however, is nothing more than the detection and correction of fault pixels in a sensor where color filters of the same color are

noncontinuously disposed. It does not disclose nor suggest at all "detecting fault pixels by establishing a correlation among pixel signals along an arrangement of consecutive ones of identical color" which features claim 1 of the present case.

In particular, Takayama in a sensor where color filters of the same color are noncontinuously disposed: obtains a mean value of the outputs of surrounding pixels of color that is identical as an observed pixel within an area where those of the same color are noncontinuous around the observed pixel; compares the mean value with the output of the observed pixel; and determines the observed pixel as a fault pixel when the difference thereof exceeds a predetermined threshold.

By contrast, in the color image processing apparatus according to claim 1 of the present application: correlation of pixel signals is sequentially established along an arrangement where those of identical color are consecutively disposed, i.e., along a continuous pixel string of the same color; and a pixel less correlated than a predetermined level with those before and after in the arrangement, i.e., one with weak correlation is determined as a fault pixel. This is a significant difference from Takayama.

As such, the color image processing apparatus according to claim 1 of the present application is different from the one disclosed in Takayame and therefore is fully patentable.

In view of the aforementioned amendments and accompanying remarks, Applicant submits that that the claims, as herein amended, are in condition for allowance. Applicant requests such action at an early date.

If the Examiner believes that this application is not now in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact Applicant's undersigned attorney to arrange for an interview to expedite the disposition of this case.

If this paper is not timely filed, Applicant respectfully petitions for an appropriate extension of time. The fees for such an extension or any other fees that may be due with respect to this paper may be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-2866.

Respectfully submitted,

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